

In response to the Election of Species Requirement mailed March 11, 2003, Applicant provisionally elects, with traverse, Species IV corresponding to Figure 6, for examination on the merits in the present application. Original Claims 1, 2, 4, 5, 13, 15, 16, 21-24, 26, 27, 34, 35, 37, 38, 43-46, and 48 and new Claims 50 and 51 are identified as readable on Species IV.

Applicant respectfully traverses the Election of Species Requirement because the PTO has not carried forward its burden of proof to establish that searching and examining the claims corresponding to the noted figures would be an undue burden.

In particular, MPEP § 803 states:

If the search and examination of an entire application can be made without serious burden, the Examiner must examine it on the merits, even though it includes claims to distinct or independent inventions.

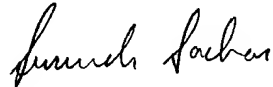
The claims of the present invention would appear to be part of an overlapping search area.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully traverses the outstanding Restriction and Election Requirement on the grounds that a search and examination of the entire application would not place a *serious* burden on the Examiner.

Consequently, Applicant respectfully requests the Election of Species Requirement be withdrawn. Accordingly, an examination on the merits of Claims 1-51 is believed to be in order, and an early and favorable action on the merits of these claims is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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